



SECTION 3.03

HOUSE LEAGUES

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In this busy world, many players want to have their tennis at their community club organized for them. They like knowing that they have a match scheduled for every Tuesday night from 8 pm –9:30 pm. Therefore, intra club or house leagues are a popular way of getting people playing and mixing with other club members in a format that can be adjusted according to the ability and competitiveness of the players (in order to make it fun).

Usually, house leagues are based on ability level, age and gender. Any combination is possible. Time of day also plays a role in determining the type of leagues offered. An example of a typical intraclub league timing schedule during the week might be as follows.

- 7:00 to 8:00 am – early morning working men’s or women’s league
- 10:00 am to 12:00 noon, 1:00 to 3:00 pm - ladies leagues or seniors leagues 4:00 to 6:00 pm – junior after school league
- 7:00 to 10:00 pm – adult leagues (mixed, men’s, women’s)



Weekends can also be used. Perhaps a Friday evening singles mixed league would work (or would a Sunday morning working men's league). It all depends on what your membership wants.

One way to run doubles house leagues is by using a progressive doubles format. This format can be played on an ongoing basis.

For example, you can set up any league on any number of courts.

Players don't need a partner ahead of time to register.

During a particular session, each person plays a set number of games with the other 3 people on that court.

At the end of the night, the person with the most points moves to the next court, the 2 players who had the second and third most points stay on that court and the person with the fewest points moves down a court (on the next league night).

This is a good way to get players playing at their level as the stronger players will move towards the top courts and the weaker ones will move down to the lower courts (thereby helping players get good matches more regularly).

It is also important to have a spare list as during the summer holiday period, people may be away for a week or two.

This list can be used to fill spots when those people are away.





Another way to run a house league is to assign interested players to teams. It's always a good idea to have more players on a team than will play each week and to have some "spares" available. Each team would have a captain who will organize rotations of the team for when people are away (and players would be responsible for getting a spare in the event they cannot play).

The numbers of people on a team, the duration of matches, the number of switches in a session, the scoring (equal number or games, a set or even games played within a time frame) and the number of weeks in a house league session can all be varied to suit the players. If there are six teams of six people in a house league, you might want to play 3 matches of roughly 40 minutes duration in an evening (but have only two matches on at any one time so each of the players gets 80 minutes of play). In order to have every team play every other team, the sessions would be 5 weeks in duration. Off court time gives people an opportunity to socialize and keeps more people involved (if courts are limited).

Keeping sessions relatively short means that you can run several sessions. This allows for greater commitment on the part of players (and also allows new players to sign up for a fresh session).

Each player plays for his/her team and the winner of the 'tie' is the team who wins the most games in the session.

For example, if there are 3 matches being played during that session in the Shapovalov vs. Raonic 'tie', if Shapovalov Team 1 wins 10-7 against Raonic Team 1, Team 2 loses 10-2 and Team 3 wins 10-4, the overall score is recorded as a 22-21 win for Team Shapovalov.

A house league will always be more popular if refreshments are served or there is a tradition of socializing at the end of the session.

If the club provides the balls or refreshments, it may be appropriate to make a per session or per evening charge for participation. But if players are expected to provide the balls (in rotation), then this program could be included in membership fees.

A third way to run house leagues is to have players sign up as doubles teams to participate in a season long activity (such as men's, women's or mixed doubles).

Teams can be grouped by play level and multiple time slots can be used on the league night (so all pools play each league night.. but at different times).

Depending on the time block available for play, 1 or 2 matches can be played each league night. The winning team can be the one who wins the most games within the playing time frame.

You can set this up so that every 4 to 6 weeks, there is a regrouping based on the standings in each different pool.

For example, you may determine (and this should be stated in the league rules before the season starts) that after each session, the top team in Pool B advances to the Pool A, the first team in the Pool C to the Pool B, etc.

Conversely, the bottom team in Pool A drops to Pool B, the bottom team in Pool B goes to Pool C, etc.

The teams can be regrouped several times over the outdoor season.

This enables teams to get the most competitive matches possible as often as possible.

There are certainly many different and creative ways to set up a house league. If any club has other ideas on house leagues that work well at your club, please feel free to share with us so we can update our information.

